

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ADDIS 04667 021040Z
ACTION NODS-00

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FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5073

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 4667

NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS PBOR ET SO US
SUBJECT: MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER

REF: A) ADDIS ABABA 4652 B) ADDIS ABABA 4653

1. SHORTLY AFTER SENDING REFTELS YESTERDAY, I WAS SUMMONED BACK TO MOFA. THERE, BERHANE DERESSA, DIRECTOR, AMERICAN AFFAIRS, WHO HAD CLLED EARLIER, TOLD ME HE WANTED TO CLEAR UP WHAT HE WAS SURE WAS A MISUNDERSTANDING ARISING FROM MY MEETING WITH FONMIN EARLIER IN DAY.

2. IN BRIEF, HE SAID FONMIN, IN RAISING POSSIBILITY OF SENDING DELEGATION TO WASHINGTON, HAD NOT RPT NOT INTENDED TO CONVEY IDEA THAT HE HAD GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT DELEGATION IN MIND. ALL FONMIN WAS ASKING ABOUT WAS MY ADVICE RE DESIRABILITY OF SENDING SOMEONE TO TALK TO THEIR FREIGHT FORWARDER ABOUT MILITARY SUPPLIES WE HAD AUTHORIZED FORWARDER TO DELIVER. IN THIS CONNECTION BERHANE WANTED TO KNOW WHETHER FREIGHT FORWARDER WAS AWARE OF OUR DECISION (I TOLD HIM THAT IT WAS MY IMPRESSION THAT WE HAD INDEED NOTIFIED FREIGHT FORWARDER -- STATE 152140 -- BUT WOULD DOUBLE-CHECK IF HE WISHED). BERHANE SAID THIS WAS REASON HE HAD ASKED ME TO HOLD MY REPORT. BOTH HE AND BERHANU DINKA HAD UNDERSTOOD FONMIN SAME WAY I HAD, AND CONVERSA-
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TION AFTER WE HAD LEFT MEETING MADE IT CLEAR THAT WAS NOT WHAT FONMIN HAD IN MIND. THERE WAS NOW NO REASON TO HOLD MY REPORT ANY LONGER, BUT MOFA WANTED MY REPORT SIMPLY TO REFLECT FONMIN'S INTEREST IN DELEGATION TO TALK WITH FREIGHT FORWARDER AND MAKE NO REFERENCE TO GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT DELEGATION.

3. COMMENT: ALL THIS IS A BIT STRANGE. FONMIN'S REFERENCE TO DELEGATION WAS PERFECTLY CLEAR DURING MEETING, AND IN FACT AT ONE POINT POLCOUNS ASKED SPECIFICALLY WHETHER FONMIN MEANT DELEGATION TO TALK WITH FREIGHT FORWARDER AND WE WERE ASSURED THIS WAS NOT CASE (I HAD ALREADY SAID THAT IF THAT WAS WHAT FONMIN HAD IN MIND, I SAW NO PROBLEM WITH DELEGATION). I CAN ONLY SURMISE THEREFORE THAT REFERENCE TO DELEGATION WAS TRIAL BALLOON AND THAT MY NEGATIVE RESPONSE TO UTILITY OF SUCH A DELEGATION DISCUSSING MILITARY SUPPLY MATTERS IN WASHINGTON, CONVINCED THEM ON REFLECTION TO BACK AWAY FROM THE SUBJECT.

4. RESULT IS THAT FROM ETHIOPIAN POINT OF VIEW, SUBJECT WAS NEVER RAISED WITH ME, AND I MUST THEREFORE ASK DEPT TO HONOR THEIR "CLARIFICATION" TOO. WITH THIS MODIFICATION IN MIND, I SEE NO REASON TO MAINTAIN HIGHLY RESTRICTIVE NODIS SLUG OF ADDIS 4652, BUT LEAVE THAT TO DEPARTMENT.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: I WOULD APPRECIATE CONFIRMATION THAT FREIGHT FORWARDER WAS NOTIFIED AND THAT WE HAVE IN FACT AUTHORIZED HIM TO GO AHEAD AND SHIP WHATEVER DEPT HAD AGREED HE COULD SHIP. I WOULD ALSO APPRECIATE READING ON STATUS OF SWIFTSHIPS (APPARENTLY MOND HERE HAS NOT COMMUNICATED WITH EITHER FREIGHT FORWARDER OR SWIFTSHIPS, CONFIDENTIAL

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ACCORDING BERHANE, SINCE MOND CLAIMED NOT TO KNOW WHETHER EITHER HAD BEEN INFORMED OF OUR EARLIER DECISION). TIENKEN

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Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 02-Aug-1977 12:00:00 am
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